Chief, Management Staff

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Assistant Management Officer

Survey of Personnel Records, Phase II.

1. **Scope of the Survey:**

   a. The official distributions of five selected personnel forms in CIA and the Department of State are compared and tabulated. Additional unofficial copies in selected DD/I and DD/P components are also tabulated.

   b. The following State Department personnel files and functions are described: the official personnel file, convenience personnel files, overseas personnel files, and the preparation and use of efficiency reports. The career boards of the Foreign Service are also described.

   c. The location of CIA personnel files prior to the establishment of a central personnel office is described and related to the question of the feasibility of decentralizing the official personnel file to the third echelon (e.g. DD/P area divisions).

2. **Distribution of All Copies of Five Personnel Forms in DD/I, DD/P and the Department of State:**

   a. **The following forms were selected:**

      Personal History Statement
      Fitness Report
      Profile
      Request for Personnel Action
      Notice of Personnel Action

   b. **Comparison of CIA and Department of State Requirements:** See Tab I for details.

      (1) **Personal History Statement:** In both organizations, copies go to the official file, the Security Office, and the employee; the operating components also frequently obtain a copy. In CIA a copy is also used for posting qualifications to the IBM qualifications roster.

      (2) **Fitness Report:** The State Department places one copy in the official file and holds one at the post until the employee leaves; it is then destroyed. CIA copies go to the official file, the Career Management Officer and Assessment and Evaluation, OTR. The A&E copy is used to

evaluate the form and will probably be eliminated when the form is ad-
judged satisfactory. Unlike the State Department, CIA operating com-
ponents permanently retain copies of the form.

(3) **Profile:** Both CIA and the Department of State have profile
forms, designed this year, which are prepared in the Office of Personnel
and placed in the official file. Both also have procedures for keeping
them up to date. The philosophy of their use is quite different, however.
In the State Department, Selection Boards are convened annually to evaluate
and rate the performance of Foreign Service Officers and are specifically
instructed to examine the full official files. The Personnel Office has
thus felt constrained from placing a profile in the official file. Place-
ment, on the other hand, is managed primarily by personnel placement
officers; they make placement decisions at panel meetings of placement
officers and present their decisions to operating chiefs. Such decisions
are tempered by the operating chiefs, of course, but the major work has
been done by the placement officers. The profile has been developed for
these placement officers and it has not been decided whether the form
should remain in the official file when it is used by the Selection Boards.

The CIA profile has been planned for major use by the career
boards in the functions of selection, placement and promotion. It is
frequently used in lieu of the official folder and this is encouraged by
the new procedure of the Office of Personnel to prepare, upon request,
photostat copies of profiles for career board use.

(4) **Request for Personnel Action:** In both organizations, copies go
to the placement officer, official file and one or more are retained by,
or sent to, affected operating components. In CIA, two copies also go
to the Security Office. In the State Department, when the form is used
for Foreign Service employees it is also a request for travel orders and
copies are sent to the Audit Section, Travel Control Section and the
Transportation Office.

(5) **Notice of Personnel Action:** CIA uses eight copies. If the num-
ber were reduced, the same offices would still require notification which
would mean multiple-routing of some copies and would delay their receipt
by some offices. This is not desirable; notification should be as prompt
as possible. The operating components surveyed are not obtaining extra
copies of this form.

The State Department uses nine copies for civil service employees;
one is sent to the Civil Service Commission and the other eight are dis-
tributed in the same manner as the CIA copies. For foreign service em-
ployees, the number of copies varies somewhat according to the type of
action; a total of eighteen offices receive retention copies and five more
offices receive, post and route a copy to another recipient.

c. **Effect of Decentralization:** There are two objectives in controlling
the number of copies of a form: one, the form should serve as completely as

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possible and two, all unnecessary duplication should be eliminated. When the State Department is able to create three additional copies of the Request for Personnel Action and use it in lieu of a separate request for travel orders, this is economy.

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I believe, however, that all, or nearly all, the CIA operating components could eliminate their copies of these forms if the official file were maintained at the third echelon level. Mr. ████ concurs with my opinion (Tab VI). This subject is treated more fully in section 5.

3. **Description of State Department Personnel Files, Efficiency Reports and Career Boards:**

a. **Personnel Files:** Full details of the location and contents of State Department personnel files are in Tab II.

(1) **The Only Official Personnel File** is in the Management Services Division, Office of Personnel. For each employee, there is an administrative folder containing papers essential to personnel administration and a performance folder containing papers used to evaluate an employee's performance.

(2) **Convenience files** exist in operating components but I am informed they are incomplete and do not hold material which belongs in the official file.

(3) **Overseas files** of career employees are similar to headquarters convenience files. Each overseas file of a career employee is destroyed when he leaves the post. Personnel authority for overseas employment of aliens is fully delegated and full personnel files for aliens are maintained at the overseas posts.

(4) **Security Files** are maintained in the State Department Office of Security. There is a notice in the personnel file room that additional information may be available in the security file, but career boards may not see the files. When it is considered advisable by the Security Office, a note is placed in the personnel performance folder that there is information in the Security Office concerning an individual. Upon request, a security officer will appear before a career board to answer questions, at his discretion, concerning an employee.

If an employee is under security investigation, a career board will not know it. If the Security Office determines that an employee should not be promoted until his investigation is completed, the Director of Personnel is notified and he removes the employee's name if it appears on a list for promotion. If the employee is later cleared, his name is restored and special action can be taken to give him his promotion.

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(5) Medical files are in the Medical Office. All that appears in the official personnel file is a report of his latest medical examination: cleared, limited or restricted. A medical officer will appear before a career board to elaborate on restrictions to service caused by ill health. He will not name the disease or illness.

(6) A Pre-employment File of foreign service applicants is maintained by the Board of Examiners (Tab IV). When an applicant is employed, his record is placed in the official personnel file.

b. Access to Personnel Files is limited to those whose names appear on a printed list in the file room. This list includes the Chief, Personnel Evaluation Branch, all placement officers and top administrative and executive personnel. Secretaries of authorized persons may obtain files in the names of their chiefs.

c. Efficiency Reports: Different efficiency report forms are used for three groups of employees (Tab III):

(1) Form DS-886 (Tab III, Annex A) is used for civil service employees in conformity with the rules of the Civil Service Commission which are detailed in three State Department instructions (Tab III, Annexes B, C and D). The form is designed for ratings of satisfactory, unsatisfactory or outstanding and the latter two require supplementary statements of justification. Reports are annual, with additional reports, if necessary, to cover all periods of service. The employee receives a copy and signs the form to acknowledge he has discussed it with his supervisor and a second time to acknowledge receipt of the rating. He may appeal his rating to a review committee.

(2) Form FS-315 (Tab III, Annex G) is used for Foreign Service Officers and Reserve Officers and the higher-salaried Foreign Service Staff Officers. It is prepared under the authority of the Foreign Service Act of 1946. It is a comprehensive document of primary importance in the rating of the officers and these ratings affect their promotions, assignments and dismissal. An officer in Washington may see all of his efficiency report. This is a recent development caused by the recommendation of a congressional committee; formerly, the officers could not see their reports (Tab III, p. 4). A rating officer may show the report to the officer being rated but "...it is not the policy of the Department..." (Tab III, Annex E, p. 5, section 11.1F). Reports are annual, with additional ones, if necessary, to cover all periods of service. The reports are reviewed in the Office of Personnel for completeness and cursory reports are returned.

(3) Form FS-205A (Tab III, Annex H) is used for the lower-salaried Staff Officers. It substitutes a check-list for thirteen performance factors in lieu of the narrative report required for Form FS-315. Its periodicity and accessibility are the same as for Form FS-315.

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d. Policy and Selection Boards: (See details in Tab IV.)

(1) The Board of the Foreign Service is a personnel policy board and maintains no personnel files.

(2) The Board of Examiners of the Foreign Service manages the examination of applicants for the foreign service. It keeps pre-employment personnel records which are transferred to the official file when an applicant is employed.

(3) The Foreign Service Institute is comparable to the CIA Office of Training. Training records are maintained and trainee-evaluations are prepared and sent to the official personnel file.

(4) Foreign Service Officer Selection Boards are established each year for each FSO class. They use the official personnel performance folders and meet full time to evaluate and rate each officer. Last year the boards took eleven weeks to do the task. Specific recommendations are made for promotion, for transfer, and for elimination of unsatisfactory officers.

(5) Staff Corps Review Panels perform, for the Staff Corps, the same functions that the Selection Boards perform for the Officers.

4. CIA Personnel Files Prior to the Establishment of a Central Personnel Office:

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a. Discussions were held with Messrs. ████████████████ 25X1A9a
████ of the Office of Personnel (Tab V) and Mr. ████████, Office of the 25X1A9a
Deputy Director for Support (Tab VI).

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b. Both discussions confirm that the DD/P operating components have never relinquished their personnel files and Mr. ████████ report of the in- 25X1A9a
effectiveness of Col. ████████'s order that they do so indicates that they never will.

5. The Case For Decentralizing the Official Personnel File:

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a. Although the Personnel Office has outlawed convenience personnel files in Regulation ████████ the Personnel Executive Officer and the Assistant Director for Planning have stated that their primary concern is that the official file be complete, and only secondarily are they concerned with duplicate files and records.

b. There are several arguments for locating the official file at the third echelon:

(1) The DD/P area division has evolved as the focal point of field and headquarters operations management. Necessary personnel data should be readily available at this point.

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(2) The DD/P third echelon chiefs have the authority (and the power) to eliminate lower echelon convenience files. I believe they will do so because the lower echelons are contiguous to the chiefs' offices and can use the third echelon file (which will be complete) almost as easily as their own.

(3) The file at the third echelon will also be closer to career boards.

(4) With the official file in the possession of the third echelon, it will hold more and thus be more useful. Material with operational implications can stay in the file until an employee leaves the division. At that time, the file can be sterilized. Mr. ████ does not believe 25X1A9a such sterilization will impose any appreciable work burden.

(5) This sterilization will be under the control of the third echelon chief, which will properly unite the authority and the responsibility for security of operational data.

(6) The chief of an operating component would have more rapid access to the personnel file of an individual in another operating component because he could go directly to the chief of the component concerned without going through the Office of Personnel.

(7) The detailed use of the file will be subject to the control of the operating chief-- the first person the file should be designed to serve.

c. The following questions must be answered before an orderly decentralization of the official file should be undertaken. My own comments on these questions are contained in Tab VII.

(1) Should all papers in the official file be decentralized?

(2) Is the decentralization of the official file a separable phase or must other functions be decentralized simultaneously?

(3) How can we assure that all essential personnel papers are maintained if the file is decentralized?

(4) Should all third echelons maintain official personnel files?

(5) Would it be better to put the official file in career boards?

(6) Should the decentralization be taken in several steps?

(7) Will the maintenance of decentralized files require a larger staff?

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SUBJECT: Survey of Personnel Records, Phase II.

ATTACHMENTS:
   Tab I - Location of All Copies of Selected Personnel Forms in ID/I, H /P
           and the Department of State, 1956.
   Tab II - Personnel Files in the Department of State
   Tab III - Efficiency Reports in the Department of State
   Tab IV - Career Boards in the Department of State
   Tab V - A Short History of Agency Personnel Operations and Records
           Maintenance
   Tab VI - Personnel Records in OPC
   Tab VII - Questions to be Considered Before Decentralizing the Official
           Personnel File